

(19)

THE  
**Loyal Observator:**  
OR,  
Historical MEMOIRS of the  
Life and Actions of  
**Roger the Fidler;**  
Alias, *The Observator.*

*Ralph.* **H**ere's a clutter with *Observators* three or four times a week! And an everlasting Din about *Whiggs* and *Trimmers*, and the Devil and all of Bus'ness! Prethee, *Nobbs*, let thee and I set up an *Observator*; 'Tis a pretty Trade, and next to that of an *Informer*, one of the most *Thriving* in these dull times. There's an *Old Fellow* in *Holborn* gets (they say) Forty Shillings a Paper certain Pen-sion, besides *By-Jobbs* of two or three Hundred *Guineys* at a lump: And yet frets, and foams, and raves, because he's no better Rewarded.

*Nobbs.* When all the swarming *Intelligencers* were  
B filenc'd

silenc'd, and *Thompson* muzzl'd, and *Care* run away, and *Curtis* and *Janeway* (Poor Snails!) had pull'd in their Horns, and were crept into their Original Shells, I was in hopes the Nation should no more have been pester'd with this *Make-bate-Trumpery*; But since the *Incorrigible Squire* scribbles on as eagerly as ever, I see no reason why we may not put in for a *Snack*; For a *Pamphlet's a Pamphlet*, whether it be writ by *Roger the Fidler*, or *Ralph the Corn-Cutter*.

*Ralph.* But I bar all discourse of *Religion* or *Government*, and *Reflections* on particular Persons.

*Nobbs.* Prethee hast thou got a new Invention to make *Butter* without *Cream*? Or the Apothecaries Trick, to give us *Oxycrocium*, and not a dram of *Saffron* in't? Alas man! 'tis the very Essence of an *Observator* to be full of *Mysteries of State*, and its Priviledge to fall *foul* on any Body. How many hundreds have been *Libell'd* that way? Nay, Persons of *highest Honour and Office* have scarce escap'd him of late. Suppose I have a mind to a good warm Place of *Credit and Profit*, (and for such Dainties *Old Men* may *Long*, as well as *Young Women*) what have I to do, but Print an *Observator*, upbraid the *Government* with my *Services* and *Disappointments*, acquaint the World what *Preferments* I would be at, and put my *Superiours* roundly in mind on't; As much as to say, *Sirs!* You are *ungrateful, and neither understand your own Interest, nor my Merits.* Then suppose I receive a *Rub* from some Persons of *Quality* that don't think me worthy; Straight I at 'em with another *Observator*;

tor, and Expose 'em as *Trimmers* and *Betrayers* of the Government ; and so Revenge my self, that no body for the future shall dare *Oppose* my Pretensions.

*Ralph.* A clever Course ! But methinks somewhat *saucy* ; and he that practises it deserves no other Advancement but to the Pillory or Whipping-Post. However, since there's an Old Proverb—*That One may better steal a Steed, than Another peep over the Hedge* ; I know not whether every *Observator* may be allow'd the like Prerogative : Therefore still I say I'll not meddle with *Edg-Tools*.

*Nobbs.* What then shall we talk of nothing at all ?

*Ralph.* No, but of something *next to Nothing*, that is, the *Observator* Himself : I go sometimes to *SAM*'s, where People cry him up as the *Atlas* of the *Church*, the *Argus* of the *State*, the very *Buckle-and-Thong of Loyalty* : And you see how he vapours of his Forty Years Service to the *Crown* : Therefore I would gladly be inform'd what Mighty Exploits he perform'd during the Old Rebellion, what Commands he had, how many Thousand Pounds he expended, what Scars of Honour he received.

*Nobbs.* You must note, The Gentleman was a *Younger Brother*, (the Scandal of a worthy Family, who have long been ashame'd of him) and so far from being able to Contribute to the Royal Cause, that during his Youth, *Phill. Porter's Plow* was his best Maintenance ; and 'tis observ'd, That he

liv'd more splendidly under the *Usurper*, than ever before or since: Whence some have thought, that the same Wind which hurried Old *Noll* to Old *Nick*, might also puff away this Gallant's Coach and Horses: For though he kept such an Equipe before, they were never afterwards visible.

*Ralph.* This is nothing to his Personal Gallantry; Perhaps he Rescu'd the Standard at *Edg-hill*, storm'd Towns (as Mountebanks draw Teeth) with a Touch, or Routed whole Armies of the Rebels, like *Almanzor*.

*Nobbs.* No, no; *Valour* is none of his Tallent: He has more *Wit* then to hazard his *Precious Person* with any *Gun* but *Joan's*; wisely considering, that if a man happen to be *Spitted through the Lungs*, or have his *Brains* dull'd with a *Lump of Lead*, 'twould go near to spoil his writing of *Observators* for ever, and then what would become of the *Government*? He marches, indeed, equipp'd with a *Sword*, but 'tis onely for Ornament: for he has not so much Courage as a *Guinney-Pig*; a Boy of Fourteen may at any time *dis-arm* him with a *Bean-Stalk*. Did you never hear how Captain C. of *Richmond Observator'd* him? Or how the Life-Guard-Man wrought a *Miracle*, and (for a moment) made him honest.

*Ralph.* Of the first I have had some inkling; he had Libell'd some of the Captains Relations, who thereupon gave him the Discipline of the *Battoon*, and made him *Dance* without his *Fiddle*; which he receiv'd as became a *Philosopher*: And 'tis the best Argument he has to prove him a *Christian*,

*stian*, because *Preces & Lachryme* were all his Defence. ---- But for the Adventure of the Lifeguard-man, I am in the dark.

*Nobbs*. The Busines was thus, — About the year 1677. One *Cole* having a Sheet against Popery, call'd, *A Rod for Rome*, (or some such like Title) bearing hard upon the Jesuites, sent it up for a Pass-Port, Mr. *Observer* refused it, (as he generally did things of that Nature) yet could give no reason; (For he was not so Ungenteel as to boast the Kindnesses he did the *Romans*.) Thus it lay by, till after the Discovery of the *Plot*, when the Old man sent it again by Mrs. *Purflow* a Printer: who having made 40 Jaunts in vain, at last sent her Maid for his Positive Answer, but she not being so much in his Favour as the *Lass* (once) in *Duck-lane*, (to whom he never denyed any thing,) he return'd it, swearing most *Bloodily* that he would not *Allow* it: As the Wench came forth, who should she meet wi. h but a Gentleman of the Guard, her Acquaintance; who understanding what she had been about, read the Copy, goes back with her, and as soon as he came into the room, displaying the Paper by one corner, as an *Ensign of War*, begins — *D--me, do you deny such an Honest Thing against the Papists, ha?* The *Observer* was just ready to *Atkinize* his Breeches, and with a thousand French Cringes and Grimaces, Cries — *Good Sir! Noble Sir! As I'm a Gentleman, I never refus'd it, only the Maid importuned me when I was busy*, — and presently *B* scrawl'd the Paper with his *Lentious Fift*; The Wench was fumbling for the *Half-Crown*, but her friend pluckt

pluckt her away abruptly, and our Observator was glad he was so well rid of him, though with the loss of *his Fee*.

*Ralph.* But still where are the Instances of his Atchievements for *Charles the Martyr*? He boasts in twenty of his Pamphlets, how near he was to the Honour of the *Gallows*; What was he to be *Hang'd like Mum-Chance*, for doing nothing?

*Nobbs.* No, but for doing nothing to the purpose. Did you never see a little *Hocus* by slight of hand popping a piece several times, first out of one Pock-  
et, and then another, perswade Folks he was damnable full of money, when one poor *Sice* was all his Stock: Just so the *Iliads* of our Observators Loyalty, when Examin'd, dwindle into one sin-  
gle, sorry, ill-manag'd Intrigue at *Lynn*. Which was nakedly thus.

About *Novemb.* 44. The Town of *Lynn* being in the Rebels hands, *the Gentleman you wot on*, pre-  
tending abundance of Inteſt there, when indeed he had none at all, procured a Commission from His Majesty to Reduce it, graciously promising him the *government* of the Town, if he could effect it, and payment of all Rewards he should promise, not exceeding 5000*l.* &c. *The Hair-brain'd Under-taker* could think of no other way to Reduce it, but by sending for one Captain *Leamon* of *Lynn*, (one that had taken the *Covenant*, and a known Zealot for the Rebels Cause) to a Papists House two or three miles off, and very discreetly blun-  
ders out the Business; shews him his Commission, promises him 1000*l.* and other preferments if he would

would betray the Town, adding, That the King did value the surprizing that Town as half his Crown. [A very likely Tale!] Leamon perceiving what a weak Tool he had to deal with, seems to comply, but the same night acquaints the Governour, Colonel Walton, and (according to promise) meets our Skulking Town-taker next day, but carried with him a Corporal in *Seamans Habit*; To whom he also very frankly shewed his *Commission*. In the mean time, Lieutenant *Stubbing*, and five Soldiers habited like Seamen, came from *Lynn* to the house, and then the disguis'd Corporal seizes our *Gallant Undertaker*, who tamely surrenders both his *Person and Commission*; and so being brought to *London*, it being proved at a *Court Martial* at *Guild-Hall*, and by himself Confesed, That he came into the Parliaments Quarters not in an hostile manner as a Souldier, but without *Drum, Trumpet, or Pafs*, as a *Spye*, and had tampered with their Officers to betray the Garison, he was for the same Sentenced to be Hanged, *Decemb. 28. 44.* and passing from the Court through the Croud, uttered these Heroick words—*I desire all people would take warning by me, that there may be no more Blood shed in this kind.* However by Appealing to the *Lords* he shuffled off present Execution, and having lain some time in *Newgate*, obtaind his Liberty; but upon what *valuable Considerations*, must remain a *Riddle*, unless his after *Familiarity with Cromwel*, and the unaccountable *Port* that he afterwards lived in, during those times, help to explain it.

*Ralph.* The Total of the Account then stands thus,

thus,— 1. That the Gentleman abused the good King with a *false Story*; It seems he thought it as easy a matter to *Surprize* a Town, as to over-run the *Printers Wife*; but was shamefully defeated in both. 2. He manag'd the Affair like a *rash Coxcomb*, and was out-witted by a dull heavy Round-head. 3. Had it succeeded, though acknowledg'd *Justifiable*, (such practises being often used in Wars, much more in the Case of *Rebels*, where the seeming Treachery is but *Duty*) yet there is little of *Glory* to be derived from such a pitiful Tampering Imploy, only it seems he was not judg'd Capable of any more *Brave* and *Honourable*, and therefore must make his most of this. 4. When he was in Danger of the Nooze, he Repented even of this his Loyal undertaking, and *Sneak'd* most pitifully, and at last got off *Suspiciously*.—So much for his Old Services. Now let's hear of his Exploits since the Restauration.

*Nobbs*.—No sooner was that *Blissful Change*, but our *Observator* first endeavour'd to set the old *Cavaliers* at Variance, and wrot against that faithful Servant to the Crown, the Learned and Loyal Mr. *James Horne*, and as far as he durst snarl'd at the Court and Chief Ministers for not preferring himself (forsooth) as well as others. And to be taken notice of, In *Defiance* to the *Act of Indemnity*, and of his Majesties most excellent *Declaration* touching *Ecclesiastick Affairs*, (A Soveraign Balm that was like to heal all our Wounds, and Mortify for ever the Designs of *Rome*) he began to ripp up old Sores, and blow the Coals of Division amongst *Protestants*,

Protestants under pretence of Exposing the Presbyterians ; yet still the Devil of Self-Interest Jogged his Elbow : for the man is known, who being newly come from *Lambeth*, and having received onely Thanks and Benedictions instead of money, swore—*Damme ! Let the B—s, henceforwards write for themselves.* After this, dispairing of higher place, he aims at the supervisal of the Press (for which his scribbling humour had somewhat adapted him) then gives the Government perpetual (false) Alarms on that side ; but having once gain'd the Point, soon learnt the faculty to wink as oft as his Spectacles were Inchanted with the dust of *Peru*. How that Affair was managed, Let the Booksellers Guinies near *Mercers-Chappel*, The Books seized, afterwards privately sold from *Cambray-house*, to be Publisht, &c. be Instances ; but especially the known Story of the Printers VVife (before mentioned) in *Bartholomew-Close*, to whom he prostituted the Interest of Church and State, offering to connive at her Husband's Printing Treason, Sedition, Heresy, Schism, any thing, if she would but gratify his bruitish Lust.

*Ralph.* But still he was *tight* to the Church of *England*.

*Nobs.* Of his Zeal therein, there are these undeniable Testimonies.

1. His having been forty times at Mass by his own Confession in Print.

2. His not Receiving the Sacrament, or so much as coming to his Parish-Church 12 long years and upwards.

3: His approving Books destructive to all Christianity, As one Intituled, *Anima mundi*, burnt afterwards ( with his hand to it ) by order ( if I mistake not ) of the Reverend Bishop of London : Another called — *A Treatise of Humane Reason*, that deserved the same Fate, as making every mans *private Fancy* Judge of Religion, the grand *Scandal* which Papists have these 100 years *falsly* cast on Protestantism.

4 By Connivance at *Papist Pamphlets* all the time of his *Dictatorship*; Not one having been during those many years honestly Prosecuted by him, though 'tis computed above 100 thousand of them were in that space dispersed, to poison His Majesties Protestant Subjects; Nay on the contrary, as often as that *Active Loyal Gentleman*, Mr. M. of the Company of Stationers, or any other of the Masters or Wardens, or Mr. Stephens, *Messenger of the Press*, had discovered any of the Papists *Pamphlet-Magazines*, this *Observitor* either by secret Intelligence prevented the *Seizure*, or afterwards *shuffled* off both *Book*, and *Prosecution*, pretending the same appertain'd to his immediate care, and so no more was heard on't.

*Ralph.* But all the Loyal-world commends his Observators as witty and highly servicable to the Goverment.

*Nobbs.* As to the *Wit*, ( no great praise in a Blade of threescore and twelve ) 'tis the Observation of Judicious Raleigh, *Nihil est Sapientia Odiosus Acumine Nimio, Nothing is more an Enemy to Wisdom than Drollery and Over-sharpness of Conceit; Hot-headed*

headed Youths, Unthinking shallow People, are easily taken, (as Larks are by Low-Bells) with a *Gingle* of words ; and perhaps some *She-Politicians* may admire him ; But the Graver and more Confederate Loyalists judge no Papers have really been more Prejudicial to his Majesties Interest ; His design therein is Evident, The *Act* that formerly gave him *Bread*, being Expired, something must be done for a *Lively-bood* ; His *Acquaintance*, his *Interest*, lay on the *Red-Letter'd Side* : who quickly Engage him to Ridicule that *Plot* which his Majesty and four several Parliaments, (after strictest Inquisition) had declar'd *Horrid* and *Dannable* ; Hence started up the *Brass Screws*, the *Salamanca Certificate*, and twenty other *Crotchets*, which neither *Secretary Castlemain*, nor *Sing*, nor any of their *St. Omers Pupils* had the luck to think of, and yet altogether as empty, Incoherent, and Nonsensical as their *Oaths* and *Allegations* ; But his feeders still not thinking this enough, have of late put him upon another *Jobb* ; To expose not only *Fanaticks* and *Whiggs*, but all *Sober Church-men* and *Moderate Loyal Protestant Subjects* under the foolish, but odious Name of *Trimmers*.

*Ralph*.—But still he avows he writes for the Government.

*Nobbs*. Nothing more false ; he writes only for his *Belly* ; 'Tis the *Crust* not the *Cause* he leaps at ; As long as he Scribbles with such Provocations, tis impossible to stop the other Pamphleteers ; Nay he has done *The Fation* the greatest Service of any man living ; being the *General Publisher* of their   
 Clandestine

Clandestine Pamphlets, and sets People agog to inquire after, and *buy* them; That Lewd Impudent and Traiterous Libel, *The Second part of the Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government*, scarce saw the Light, before he proclaimed and repeated it; And if *Hunt's* lawcy Book have Sold 10000, He is beholden at least for putting off 8000 of them, to the *Observator*. Some affirm, that for this ( Secret ) Service he has a *Pension* from the *Whiggs*, equal to his Presents from the *Tories*; but tis certain when any body Prints an *obnoxious Pamphlet*, they first send it to him by the *Penny-Post*, to save 10*s.* Charge of putting it in the *Gazet*.

*Ralph.*—I could not before guess at the Reason why he has of late express'd so much Malice against the honest Messenger of the Press, that according to his *Duty* faithfully and *Impartially* discharg'd his Office towards suppetting all Pamphlets, both *Phanatical* and *Popish*; But if this Gentleman gets Friends by the *one*, and money by the *other*; tis no wonder, if he have a spight at every body that would Damm up both his *Mills* at once—But it grows late, and I am to meet a Friend at *Sam's*, so Farewel till I see you next.

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